

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Status of Claims

Claims 18-37 are pending, with claims 18 and 33 being the only independent claims. Claims 18-32 have been amended. Claims 33-37 have been added.

Overview of the Office Action

Claims 18-32 stand objected because of various informalities.

Claims 18-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,512,620 (Tillotson).

Claims 18-19, and 31-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,372,519 (Chen).

Amendments Addressing Informalities

This application is a division of application Serial No. 08/902,453, now issued. The specification has been amended to reflect the current status of the parent application.

Claims 18-32 have been amended to overcome the informalities objections. In view of this, withdrawal of the objections to claims 18-32 is respectfully requested.

Foreign Priority Claim

Applicants request acknowledgement of applicants' claim of foreign priority as well as the receipt of the foreign priority document.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants submit herewith an Information Disclosure Statement. Consideration of the cited references is requested as well as an appropriate acknowledgement thereof.

Summary of Subject Matter Disclosed in the Specification

The following descriptive details are based on the specification. They are provided only for the convenience of the Examiner as part of the discussion presented herein, and are not intended to argue limitations which are unclaimed.

In one embodiment of the present application, a terminal 2 comprises a housing 4 made of insulating material, and a slit blade insulation piercing connector (SBIPC) 11. The SBIPC 11 has a wire receiving slit 12 for receiving an insulated wire 20. The housing 4 has a longitudinal axis 17, a wire insertion side, and two spaced walls 9, 10. The walls 9, 10 define therebetween a contact zone 3 open to the wire insertion side of the housing 4. See, e.g., Fig. 5; page 13, line 20 to page 14, line 5.

A pair of grooves 13 of the housing 4 keep the SBIPC 11 in the contact zone 3 in an orientation that is generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis 17, with the wire receiving slit 12 being open to the wire insertion side of the housing 4. See, e.g., Fig. 5; page 14, lines 1, 2, 8, 9. The housing 4 further has a first pair of opposite, rib-shaped projections 14 at each side of the SBIPC 11. Each first pair of projections 14 are positioned at a distance from the SBIPC, viewed from the wire insertion side, project inward from the walls 9, 10, respectively, and define therebetween a wire inlet slot 15 which is open to the wire insertion side of the housing. Each wire inlet slot 15 is aligned with the wire receiving slit 12 of the SBIPC, and defines a lateral limit of the contact zone 3. See, e.g., Fig. 5; page 14, lines 12-22. The walls 9, 10 in the region

of the contact zone and the first pairs of projections 14 define a chamber, the cross section of which is essentially square, when viewed from the wire insertion side of the housing. Fig. 5; page 14, lines 19-23. The walls 9, 10 further define therebetween two groove-shaped extensions 16, each of which projects outward from its respective wire inlet slot 15 along the longitudinal axis 17, and is open to the wire insertion side of the housing. Each extension 16 is so dimensioned that a free end of the wire 20 can be surely clamped therein against accidental contact. See, e.g., Figs. 5, 21; page 14, lines 22-27. The width of each extension 16 can be slightly less, essentially equal to, or slightly larger than the outer diameter of the wire 20. Page 15, line 29-page 16, line 1.

Various modifications can be made to this embodiment. For example, at least one extension can have a second pair of opposite, rib-shaped projections 22 at its distal end. See Fig. 8. Similar to the projections 14, the second pair of projections 22 project inward from the walls 9, 10, respectively, and define therebetween a wire reception slot 23. Fig. 8; page 16, lines 21-25.

The width of the wire inlet slots 15 and/or the wire reception slot 23 is essentially equal to or less than the outer diameter of the wire 20. Page 16, lines 1-5, 27-28.

In addition, one or both of the extensions 16 can be closed off by a frangible end wall 27 or a pair of swingable doors 28. Figs. 8-11; page 18, line 5-page 19, line 1.

Argument

Independent Claim 18

Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 18 is not anticipated by Tillotson or Chen because neither Tillotson nor Chen discloses, either expressly or inherently, each and every element as set forth in claim 18.

In particular, neither Tillotson nor Chen discloses a first pair of rib-shaped projections positioned a distance from the SBIPC, where the projections extend along the longitudinal axis. Neither the pairs of projections 30 in Tillotson nor the pairs of projections in Chen are positioned a distance from the SBIPC. On the contrary, they are positioned immediately next to the SBIPC because their function is to form a SBIPC retaining channel. See, e.g., col. 5, lines 55-61 of Tillotson; col. 2, lines 51-62 of Chen. In contrast, in amended claim 18, the first pair of projections do not function as a SBIPC retaining channel. Instead, they define an inlet slot 15 therebetween, and are positioned a distance from the SBIPC. As discussed earlier, in the present application, a pair of opposite grooves 13 on the housing 4 function as a SBIPC retaining channel.

Furthermore, neither Tillotson nor Chen discloses a groove-shaped extension projecting outward from the inlet slot along the longitudinal axis, the width of which is smaller or at most slightly larger than the outer diameter of the wire, as recited in amended claim 18. Tillotson and Chen are silent on such a feature.

Moreover, Chen does not disclose a second pair of rib-shaped projections near the distal end of the extension, which define therebetween a reception slot for the insulated wire, as recited in amended claim 18.

In view of these differences, withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of claim 18 in view of Tillotson and separately in view of Chen is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 19-32

Dependent claims 19-32 are patentable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 18 is patentable, as well as for the additional limitations recited therein.

Applicants would like to point out that, contrary to the Examiner's interpretation, some of the additional limitations recited in claims 19-32 are not disclosed in Tillotson or Chen. For example, Tillotson does not have a bottom wall formed on the extension and being essentially in alignment with a bottom edge of the wire receiving slit, as recited in claim 22. In Tillotson, the wall 25 below the wire opening 22 is a front wall, not a bottom wall as set forth in claim 22, and has a top side which is much higher than the bottom edge of the wire receiving slit. See Figs. 1-2.

In addition, neither Tillotson nor Chen discloses a frangible closing-wall, or an openable closing means, as recited in claims 24-25.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of claims 19-32 is respectfully requested.

Claims 33-38

Claims 33-37 have been added to the application to more completely cover certain aspects of the invention.

Independent claim 33 is patentable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 18 is patentable, as well as for the additional limitations recited therein.

Each of claims 34-37 depends, directly or indirectly, from allowable claim 33, and as such benefits from its allowability.

Conclusion

Based on all of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable action to this effect and early passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any comments, questions, suggestions or objections, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned in order to facilitate reaching a resolution of any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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